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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the use of a teacher-designed text of authentic reading materials (such as a university catalog, grocery store catalog, and tourist information brochures) in place of a commercially-produced textbook in the English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom. It is argued that such materials provide ESL students with greater access to American culture, allow adjustment of content to the students' proficiency level, and are motivating to students. Activities accompanying use of the text are designed to be interactive and authentic and to correspond to current second language teaching theory. Pre-reading, reading, and post-reading activities are described. Finally, an eclectic approach to ESL instruction instead of the conventional grammar-translation method is advocated, for both instructional purposes and for purposes of classroom management. Activities for each unit of the teacher-developed text are appended. Contains 21 references. (MSE)

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"Reading includes discovering meaning in print and script, within a social context, through bottom-up and top-down processing and the use of strategies and skills" (Gebhard, 1996c, p. 197).

I, as an EFL reading teacher, want to improve my students' (high-beginning to low-intermediate level freshmen at Korean colleges) reading ability in English. For it, what I can do first is to try to give them more effective lessons to enhance their interest in reading in English. Therefore, I'll teach them tentatively, for 12 hours, new reading lessons in replacement of their current counterparts, expecting that the new ones turn out more fruitful.

For the current lessons, we have customarily used a commercially-made text of classic writings, "a transmission model of reading" (Zamel, 1992, p. 463) as a approach to reading, and the Grammar-Translation Method as an instructional mode. However, each of these has revealed somewhat weak points. Therefore, for the new counterparts, I'll try some substitute for each of them: I'll adopt a teacher-made text of authentic printed materials, introduce an interactive approach to reading, and enforce an eclectic way of teaching. To be concrete, for an interactive approach to reading, I'll select reading activities (pre-, during-, and post-reading activities) as a teaching practice; for the eclectic way of teaching, I'll teach four language skills, focusing on reading, and endeavor after efficient classroom management for a student-centered class.

In this paper, I'll discuss, in turn, (1) the propriety of using a teacher-made authentic reading text, (2) the usefulness and procedures of reading activities, and (3) the eclectic way of teaching. In the process of discussing each, I'll also point out problems of the current text, approach to reading, and instructional mode. Lastly, in the appendices attached to

this paper, I'll specify activity procedures for each chapter of the text that I made for my students with authentic materials.

The Propriety of Using a Teacher-made Authentic Reading Text

Gebhard (1987) claims that the content of reading materials should be interesting, adequately representing the culture of a society described and having moderate linguistic complexity for students taught.
He (1996c) also argues that to get unmotivated student readers to feel interest in reading, the content needs to meet their real life interests, citing the speculation of Stevick (1978) that people learn better when what they are studying really comes out of their own lives, to which they would in some way commit themselves.

I agree with Gebhard (1987; 1996c). And, viewing from those conditions suggested by him, I think that the current text of classic writings is somewhat improper for my students to use. The reasons are:

- almost all the content of those writings exists in a cultural vacuum, or represents a given culture very indirectly;
- the vocabulary and syntax used in the writings seem to be too difficult for the high-beginning to low-intermediate EFL college freshmen to handle;
- in spite of the fact that most of the students are, as a rule of thumb, unmotivated readers in English, most of the writings treat metaphysical matters having nothing to do with real life.

Therefore, as a substitute for the text, I intend to create a new text for the students, by using authentic printed materials such as university catalogs, grocery store catalogs, and tourist information brochures. The authentic text, entitled "Discovering America", is composed of three chapters (Searching for Indiana University of Pennsylvania; At Giant

Eagle; One Week Trip to Hawaii), and it appropriately meets the above-mentioned conditions, which I'll discuss in sequence.

First, with the text, I can offer my students an opportunity for direct access to some places (college, grocery store, and rest area) that represent typical American culture (hard-working, shopping in a money-saving way, and enjoying life). Second, I can adjust semantic and syntactic level of the text to "i+1" for the students by considering their current proficiency level in vocabulary and syntax. Third, with the text, I can highly motivate those students to attend to its content. Many of them want to go to the U.S. for further study (probably in the fields such as fine arts, music, physical education, and etc. which little require academic English), travel, and shopping. Therefore, to get some specific information about them in America, the students are sure to read it willingly. Furthermore, with the text which directly brings the U.S. outside world into my classroom, I can have my students process English authentically, i.e., in the way that it is used in the real life situations there, focusing on meaning and content rather than language itself. At this point, I agree to Gebhard's (1996b) assertion of advantages of using authentic materials in classrooms.

In short, I think that the "teacher-made and audience-specific" (Richards, 1993, p. 6) authentic text, owing to its appropriate cultural representation, suitable linguistic complexity, treatment of real life interests, and authenticity, can be properly used as a reading text for my students. Also, while using the text in the class, I'll provide other authentic printed materials related to its content as supplementary ones, such as bank checks and deposit forms, driver's licenses, and advertisements for lodging for IUP chapter, grocery coupons and cereal boxes for Giant Eagle chapter, and travel magazines, restaurant menus, hotel registration forms, and bus, taxi, and jitney schedules for Hawaii

chapter. I think that, with the authentic reading text and the supplementary materials, once the students come to know the usefulness of reading in English by satisfying their practical purposes, they can advance their interest in reading in it. And, this will act as the groundwork for developing their reading ability in English by making them read more and more, I hope.

The Usefulness and Procedures of Reading Activities

When my students deal with the authentic text, I'll have them do reading activities which are designed from comprehension of it to student production, since those activities must be useful, I believe, especially for the students who have received reading instruction only, in spoken Korean, in the reading class. The belief is based on (1) a possibility that an interactive approach to reading, of which reading activities can be a teaching practice, is probably a more effective approach than "a transmission model of reading", (2) Savova and Donato's advocacy of language-learning activities, (3) compatibility between the activities and the authentic text, and (4) Melvin and Stout's suggestion about using authentic materials. Now, I'll discuss these points in order.

(1) Traditionally, teaching of reading has continued to reflect "a transmission model of reading" (Zamel, 1992, p. 463) which assumes that ideas, which all readers can agree upon, reside in and are transmitted by a text. Accordingly, the teaching has focused on identification and retrieval of a set of ideas in a text, leading student readers to rely absolutely on the text for meaning. This aspect is most evident with comprehension questions in the current reading text, which call for predetermined answers rather than interpretations of students. However, in the 1990s, teaching of reading has needed to reflect the research efforts of some scholars (Carrell & Eisterhold, 1987; Clarke &

Silberstein, 1987; Langer, 1990; Marshall, 1987; Rigg, 1991) that reading is an interaction between the language on pages and the purposes, expectations, and prior knowledge of readers. Gross (1991) examined, at one traditional school over one quarter of a school year, how traditional methods of teaching literature were replaced by more interactive approaches to text. Two teachers and four English classes of intermediate-level eighth and ninth grade participated in the study, and its findings were that student grades increased remarkably with the replacement. Therefore, it can be said that an interactive approach to reading may be more effective for improving students' reading ability than the traditional counterpart. Here, I'd like to assert that those reading activities (pre-, during-, and post-reading activities), which I'll have my students do, can be used as a teaching practice of an interactive approach to reading: The activities are given to promote their background knowledge of, reading skills and strategies of, and application of knowledge from the text content.

(2) Savova and Donato (1991) advocate using language-learning activities in the classroom by discussing that those activities are meaning-centered, motivated and constructed on real-world aims, open-ended and unpredictable by engaging students in communicative acts of real-life discourse, and uniting all the language skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) for successfully carrying out and completing the task.

(3) Those characteristics of the activities are compatible with some of those of the authentic text that I created.

(4) According to Melvin and Stout (1987), authentic materials, if to be effective, should be used from comprehension to production, since the objective of students' reading them is for some particular information as a means to some consequent activity.

When progressing the activities, during comprehension stage, I'll provide pre-reading activities and reading comprehension tasks to facilitate my students' understanding the text content, and, during production stage, post-reading activities to facilitate their applying the understanding of it. I'll offer those activities together with small group work.

As pre-reading activities, I'll offer each group previews and an opportunity for short discussion of the content of each chapter, to help the students build up prior knowledge. I'll give previews, as Gebhard (1987) suggests, with spoken language, a handout of 1-2 paragraph(s), and pictures, or, with any one or two of them. The item(s) for previews will be the same for each group. Through it or them, the students can get some information about the content of each chapter, and that information will give them a chance to gain new knowledge and recall already existing knowledge. Also, I'll suggest some issues for short discussion, sometimes assigning each different issue to each group, and, other times, common issues for all the groups. Through discussion, the students can have an opportunity to think of their own experience related to the topic of each chapter, increasing their sensitivity to its content. At the end of pre-reading activities, to help the students all the more realize that reading is an interaction between a reader and a text, I'll sometimes ask each group to develop questions. Those questions should be the ones associated with its topic, the answers to which members of each group expect to find in its content. In this way, the students can approach each chapter with certain schemata in mind and with their own questions.

For the activities those students can do during reading, I'll have them answer cooperatively with their group members to the questions in the questionnaire made by myself beforehand, and also to those questions raised by themselves during pre-reading activities. The questionnaire will

be the same one kind for each group, designed for the students to practice reading skills. Therefore, it contains various kinds of questions which require skimming or scanning or thorough reading of each chapter. For a skimming activity, they can practice answering 1-2 question(s) which ask(s) its overall meaning, and, for a scanning activity, several questions which ask, as their each answer, some specific information that can be a means to post-reading activities. For a thorough reading activity, the members of each group can deal with a few open-ended questions which demand more active discussion for their each answer; if one or two of the questions is (are) a problem-solving one(s), they can produce more than one different solutions to a problem. Those open-ended questions make the members go back to the content of each chapter more often, enabling them to understand its content more thoroughly. Furthermore, as Grellet (1981) recommends, I'll put some questions which request non-linguistic activity, i.e., tracing a route on a map, to make the reading activity flexible and varied.

Also, while doing pre-reading activities and reading comprehension tasks, the students can get some reading strategies: With pre-reading activities, they can have knowledge about the topic of, and draw inferences from the title of each chapter; with reading comprehension tasks, they can skip words they don't know, guess the meaning of unfamiliar words from the context, and purposefully reread to check comprehension.

Lastly, as post-reading activities, I'll focus on each group's ability to communicate its reached conclusions, which come from the understanding of each chapter, to me and the other groups. Each group reports its own conclusions with "authentic tasks" (Ahellal, 1990, p. 38) which replicate what usually takes place after reading at the outside world, such as role-playing, simulations, letter-writing, oral presentation of

problem-solving tasks, making a shopping list, making a trip schedule, and etc. While performing those authentic tasks, members of each group will communicate their actual needs in spoken and/or written English, coming to realize the usefulness of learning the language.

The Eclectic Way of Teaching: Its Teaching Purpose and Focus, and Classroom Management

Customarily, English reading lessons with a text of classic writings have been given with the Grammar-Translation Method. However, I think that the instructional mode is unsuitable to continue to be used, especially for the new lessons with a text of authentic printed materials. I'll discuss the reasons in two ways: (1) teaching purpose and focus, and (2) classroom management, in this method.

(1) In current lessons, only reading skill has been taught, and literary language, regarded as much more important than spoken one. For, as Richards and Rodgers (1987) state, in the Grammar-Translation Method, language is viewed as a system of structurally related elements for the coding of meaning, and the purpose of teaching a foreign language is to enable students to read literature written in it. Accordingly, teaching in spoken Korean has focused on language elements which are necessary for students' understanding the meaning of those classic writings, such as grammar rules, vocabulary, and translation of English into Korean and vice versa. Yet, for the new lessons, the traditional, grammar-based instructions seem inapt as a way of teaching. For, in the new lessons, reading skill is taught by using the other language skills (speaking, listening, and writing), and colloquial language, considered as much more important than literary one. Therefore, teaching needs to consider the other language skills, focusing on reading written in authentic English. However, the traditional instructions can't give an opportunity for the

students to interact directly with English--to acquire it by using it rather than to learn it by studying it, while second language acquisition, according to Taylor (1987), depends on exposition and involvement in real communication in that language. With the current instructions, many Korean students have failed to go from competence to performance, i.e., relate structural knowledge and rules of English to functional use of it.

(2) In each classroom, a teacher has been an authority, wielding power over every particular in it, and transmitter of knowledge; students have learned individually from their teacher and text, seated in rows and columns, conforming to linear and sequential transmission of information. Therefore, most interaction has been from the teacher to his/her students, with little student initiation, and, between students themselves, there has been neither interaction nor cooperation in learning. Also, when some students have made errors in their answer to the teacher's questions, the teacher him-/herself has treated those errors immediately with some blame on the students, while the other successful students have got praised from him/her. Accordingly, many students have felt anxiety about being questioned in the class, and there has been no risk-taking atmosphere in the classroom. As Bailey (1983) points out, this anxiety must have originated from their competitiveness with their peers and desire to excel them. Yet, for the new lessons, the static, teacher-centered, and discriminating way of classroom management appears improper, which has led that the students have just remained in their passive role, with a feeling of anxiety and competitiveness. For, in the new lessons, the students need to read, talk and listen, and write by interacting between themselves actively and cooperatively, with the help of their teacher. Therefore, to my thinking, alternative way of managing the classroom has to be considered, which can bring about dynamic, student-centered, and egalitarian atmosphere in it.

So, for the new English reading lessons, I'll try an eclectic method which chooses what appears to be the best from various methods or ideas or new experiments in a compromise. I'll discuss (1) teaching purpose and focus, and (2) classroom management, in this method.

(1) In the eclectic method, language is viewed both as a communicative vehicle between humans and as a system for the coding of meaning, and the purpose of teaching a foreign language is to help students command the language as an integrated whole. Therefore, I'll teach my class in spoken English, leading the students to read the authentic materials with an interactive approach to reading, and, about and/or based on the reading content, in English, to speak with and listen to one another in a way of real-life discourse, and to write with a process approach to writing. They'll practice all the language skills, focusing on meaning and content rather than language itself.

(2) Through more efficient classroom management, I'll endeavor to make a student-centered classroom. I'll try to make it by activating more interaction between me and the students, and especially between the students themselves. Therefore, as Gebhard (1996a) recommends, I'll pay much attention to the factors such as teacher talk, making language comprehensible to the students, teacher's questioning behaviors, grouping students, and keeping students on task, all of which contribute to produce classroom interaction in their combined state. Let me specify each of these factors.

Firstly, I'll try to reduce my talk to give the students more opportunity to interact between themselves. However, it can be important in providing them with substantial spoken English input. Therefore, I'll talk selectively and purposefully only by giving instructions, asking or answering to questions of the students, explaining homework assignments, and etc. Also, in those cases, I'll make my language comprehensible to

them by decreasing speech rate, simplifying language, and adding paralinguistic mediums such as gestures and facial expressions.

Secondly, when questioning the students, I'll ask referential questions more than display ones, use confirmation questions and clarification checks, and apply study-other, life-general, and life-personal questions appropriately to promote interaction between them and myself. Also, when the designated student cannot or will not answer immediately, I'll make an effort to increase a wait time up to 3 seconds, offering polite encouragement in the meanwhile and genuinely wanting to hear his or her answer. When he or she makes an incorrect answer, I'll inform him/her indirectly of the fact, giving a chance of self-treatment. If the self-treatment is not effective, I'll provide a cognitive and affective feedback. In that way, I'll try to enhance the students' motivation for participation and self-confidence.

Thirdly, I'll activate group work during the reading activities to promote student-student interaction and their active and cooperative learning. For, group work has been shown to contribute to a positive affective climate in the classroom by increasing students' motivation to learn, fostering their allegiance to each other, and stressing the value of every student's contribution to the learning process (Long & Porter, 1985; Savova & Donato, 1991). When grouping the students, I'll do them sometimes selectively by myself before class, and other times randomly in class, depending on the needs at given times. When grouping the students selectively, I'll do them homogeneously or mix them based on their ability and experience (accurate/not accurate, fluent/not fluent, been abroad/not been abroad) or personality factors (shy/outgoing, talkers/nontalkers). When grouping the students randomly, I'll do them by lottery (same flavor candy, same number, same coin ...). In case of homogeneous groups, I'll help the comparatively lower-level or shy

student groups by acting as a helper and facilitator for them; in case of heterogeneous groups, some active students of higher ability can help their own group members by acting, for example, as a discussion leader.

Finally, I'll keep the students on tasks by making each goal clear to them through distinct instructions, setting a reasonable time limit for each task, giving tasks that have reportable products like solutions to a problem, and appointing the students to take on roles such as recording secretaries, timekeepers, discussion leaders, and presenters of the conclusion, and etc.

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Appendix 1 - Searching for IUP

Pre-reading activities

Many college freshmen in Korea want to study in the U.S. for quite a while. Therefore, at first, I'll suggest the following issues to the groups for short discussion:

- Have you ever visited some American universities during your past trip? If so, what was your impression about them?
- What would be the similarities and the differences between American and Korean colleges?
- What do you expect in your American college life, if you've got the opportunity for it?
- Which major field of study do you want to specialize at an American college? Why?

Then, announcing to them, "Let's suppose that all of you are, sooner or later, applying for a undergraduate program at an American university, IUP. Then, as a first step, you need to know some information about that school", I'll distribute a written handout to each group. In the handout, the following is written: "You will explore the history of IUP, inquire its tuition fee, admission procedure, credit evaluation, and housing information, make out a schedule for visiting the school, and practice map tracing for the buildings on campus." Then, to stimulate their curiosity about the reading content, and therefore, to activate their anticipation and inference of it, I'll also provide each group with a collage of pictures of IUP, letting its members looking through them. Lastly, I'll ask each group to raise some questions about IUP the answers to which it wants to find out in the reading content.

Reading comprehension tasks

The questionnaire for this chapter contains nine questions.

1. How do they introduce IUP in "The History of IUP" section? (question for skimming)
2. Do you want to visit IUP and know it better before sending your application form? If so, choose one program which you can join to visit the school. (question for scanning)
3. As a prospective student, what kinds of information can you get by contacting the admissions office? What is their phone number? (question for scanning)
4. When you apply for admission to IUP, what sorts of documents do you have to send to the admissions office? (question for scanning)
5. Which degrees does IUP offer in the undergraduate program and how many credits are needed to finish it? (question for scanning)
6. How much do you have to pay, for one semester, for tuition fee, books, living expenses, and housing, all included? (question for scanning)
7. Once you become an IUP student, you may want to live off campus in privately owned facilities. Where can you get some information about them? (question for scanning)
8. If it were possible to finish the undergraduate program within a period shorter than 4 years, would you try it? If so, why? If not, why? If you would try it, what do you have to do? (open-ended question)
9. As an IUP student, you want to meet your academic advisor at his/her office located in the Sutton Hall at 10:30 A.M., then hand in your health form at the Pechan Health Center, then go to the on-campus post office to mail a letter to Korea, and then have your lunch at the Foster Dining Hall at noon with your friends. Trace

those buildings on the campus map by indicating their each number in order. (question for non-linguistic activity)

Post-reading activities

I'll give the students a problem-solving task as follows: "Supposing one of your friends, a freshman at a Korean college, plans to quit it and go to IUP for studying in America, how can you advise him/her to make a decision?" To solve this problem, first, I'll have members of each group cooperatively write him/her a letter in English, giving their own advice to his/her plan based on lots of information about IUP. Then, I'll let one volunteer per each group read aloud its own letter to the whole class, making a justification of its advice, and allow members of the other groups to ask some questions of the given letter, if any.

Appendix 2 - At Giant Eagle

Pre-reading activities

At first, I'll announce to the students, "Let's all go to Giant Eagle, right now. Keep in mind that American grocery stores are different from Korean supermarkets in some respects." Then, I'll have members of each group discuss their past experience of shopping at Korean supermarkets and/or U.S. grocery stores. I'll ask them to focus on things they bought and their each price, things they needed but could not find (Things like stationery, magazines, flowers, and medicine, they can find at American grocery stores, but, not at Korean supermarkets, and, in case of liquor, the reverse.), the cases that cash was not enough to pay for the things they bought, and so on. At the end of discussion, I'll ask each group to make a list of things that its members want to buy at Giant Eagle for special dinner.

Reading comprehension tasks

The questionnaire is made up of 7 questions.

1. What kinds of things are sold at Giant Eagle? (question for skimming)
2. Select every item you can buy with five dollars. (question for scanning)
3. Make a list of things that you can buy with a price discounted more than 30 cents from the regular price by manufacturer's coupons. (question for scanning)
4. Is there any special goods for Christmas? If so, what are they? (question for scanning)
5. Pick out things that you can buy at Giant Eagle but you can't at Korean supermarkets and vice versa. (question for scanning)

6. Based on the answers to question 5, can you say that Giant Eagle is a department store? If yes, why? If no, why? (open-ended question)
7. Let's say you've bought things amounting to $32.41, and you have not enough cash for the price. What can you do? (problem-solving question)

Post-reading activities

I'll ask each group to make a list of things that its members want to buy with 50 dollars to prepare for Christmas dinner for 4 people. Then, I'll have a presenter per each group write the list on the chalkboard to share it with the other groups. Also, two volunteers from each group create role-plays before the whole class, one acting as a cashier or a clerk, and the other, as a customer.

Appendix 3 - One Week Trip to Hawaii

Pre-reading activities

At first, since most of the students must have had the experience of a trip somewhere, I'll have members of each group talk about their own to one another. I'll ask them to focus on inns or hotels they stayed at nights, restaurants they stopped by and their menus, recreational activities they did, historic places they visited, various transportations they used, and so on. Then, announcing to the students, "Students, you've worked so hard until now. How about enjoying your winter vacation in Hawaii for one week?", I'll give out some fascinating pictures of it to each group. Lastly, I'll have each group write about what its members expect to see and experience in Hawaii.

Reading comprehension tasks

Hawaii is composed of several islands. Therefore, in reading comprehension tasks, I'll put emphasis on students' catching the characteristics of each island and map-tracing. The questionnaire contains 11 questions.

1. How many islands is Hawaii made up of and what is their each name? (question for scanning)
2. In Oahu, I want to see the USS Arizona Memorial, then historic relics and artifacts, and lastly Polynesian arts, crafts, and music. Where can I go to see them? Find out the places and trace them on a map in sequence. (question for scanning and map-tracing)
3. I want to travel with my mother and 18-year-old twin sisters. Which hotels in Oahu provide a family plan that permits these girls to stay free of charge? (question for scanning)

4. What's the legend of Maui? Describe it briefly. (question for skimming)
5. If you have only 180 dollars for lodging charges for 3 nights in Maui and plan to share a room with 2 friends, which rooms of which hotels are available to you? List the names of them. (question for scanning and thorough reading)
6. In Hawaii (The Big Island), I want to visit the place where the discoverer of the Hawaiian Islands was killed, then where the hardwood and stone handiwork of ancient Hawaiian artisans are exhibited, then where I can see the Kiluea and Mauna, and lastly where I can enjoy tropical skiing. Find out those places and trace the routes on the map. (question for scanning and map-tracing)
7. I want to see the nightly torchlighting ceremony, the Kauais tradition. Where is it held? Locate the place on the map. And I want to stay there one night sharing the room with my 2 friends. What's the name of the cheapest room and how much per one person? (question for scanning, thorough reading, and map-tracing)
8. Where can I go in Molokai to see the Asian and African animals roam free? Find out the place and locate it on the map. (question for scanning and map-tracing)
9. What is Lanai famous for? (question for skimming)
10. In Lanai, I want to visit the place which got its name from the great number of vessels abandoned. Find out the place and trace it on the map. (question for scanning and map-tracing)
11. Which place in Hawaii do you like the most? Why? (open-ended question)

Post-reading activities

I'll ask each group to make a detailed schedule for 7 days. It has to include time, places for lodging and eating, transportation methods between places, types of activity, the reason they choose those places and activities, and budget based on a set amount of money. The budget includes hotel, meal, entertainment, and transportation costs. Each group shares its completed schedule with the other groups by writing down on the chalkboard and explaining the schedule, and justifying its choices to the whole class. Also, a few volunteers simulate as tour experts, orally presenting to the class what they have experienced at various tour sites.